IN THE CLAIMS:

Applicants herein amend claims 29-41 and 43-48. Claims 1-28 were previously canceled. No additional claims are canceled and no claims are added. All pending claims and their present status are produced below.

1-28. (Canceled).

29. (Currently amended) A method for use in a detector device for controlling access to information on a network including a plurality of interconnected devices, the detector device coupled to the network between a first device and a second device, the method comprising:

monitoring, independent of the first device and the second device, a plurality of request signals for data between the first device and the second device in the network, at least one request signal including a user identification parameter;

determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in the at least one request signal is permitted access to the data being requested;

comparing a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a predetermined parameter associated with the data to determine permission to access the data; and

generating a response to the request signal to alter communications between the first device and the second device in response to the comparison providing a first result and not altering communications between the first device and the second device in response to the comparison providing a second result, the detector device allowing the plurality of request signals to pass uninterrupted

between the first device and the second device regardless of the first result or

the second result in response to an operational failure of the detector device,

the operational failure comprising a non-functioning operation.

30.   (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein

the ~~provided~~ generated response comprises allowing access to the data when the

predetermined parameter associated with the user is greater than or equal to [[a]] the

predetermined parameter associated with the data.

31.   (Currently Amended) [[A]] The method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein

the ~~provided~~ generated response comprises allowing access to the data when the

predetermined parameter associated with the user is less than or equal to [[a]] the

predetermined parameter associated with the data.

32.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, wherein the ~~provided~~ generated

response comprises re-directing the ~~data~~ request signal to a third device in response to

the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than the

predetermined ~~value~~ parameter associated with the data, the third device allowing for

a re-setting of the predetermined parameter associated with the user to a new

parameter comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter

associated with the data.

33.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, wherein the predetermined parameter

associated with the user is one from a group ~~comprising~~ consisting of a positive

monetary value, a positive time value, a bandwidth value, a quality of service value,

and a content rating.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising allowing access to one from a group comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in response to at least one of the bandwidth value or the quality of service value being greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 29, further comprising providing access to a second data that does not require a parameter value in response to either the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data or the user not having permission to access the data corresponding to the request signal.

36. (Currently Amended) A network-based billing method for use in a detector device for providing access to resources on a network, the detector device coupled to the network such that the detector device does not introduce a point of failure, the method comprising:

monitoring, independent from the resources, a data signal from a device on [[a]] the network, the data signal including a request for a resource;

identifying a value for accessing the resource;

associating a user identification with the data signal;

determining whether a user identified by the user identification is permitted access to the resource;

identifying a credit balance for the user identification;

comparing the credit balance with the value to determine whether access to the resource is permissible;

in response to the comparison, determining a response to the request for the resource;
and

in response to an operational failure within the detector device, allowing data signals to pass uninterrupted between the resources on the network, the operational failure comprising a non-functioning operation.

37. (Currently Amended) The ~~network-based-billing~~ method of claim 36, further comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being less than or equal to ~~the~~ <u>a</u> cost <u>of</u> preventing access to the resource.

38. (Currently Amended) The ~~network-based-billing~~ method of claim 36, further comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being greater than or equal to ~~the~~ <u>a</u> cost <u>of</u> preventing access to the resource.

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36, further comprising re-directing the data signal to a second resource in response to the credit balance being less than the ~~cost~~ <u>value</u>, the second resource configured to allow for increasing the credit balance.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36, further comprising providing access to a second resource having no cost in response to the credit balance being less than the ~~cost~~ <u>value</u>.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 36, wherein the ~~cost~~ <u>value</u> comprises one from a group ~~comprising~~ <u>consisting of</u> a monetary value, a quality of service value, a bandwidth value, a time value, and a content rating value.

42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising passing the data signal to a second device having the resource.

43.   (Currently Amended) A detector device to control access to information on a

network including a plurality of interconnected devices, the device comprising:

a processing unit within [[a]] the detector device coupled to the network between a

first device and a second device, the detector device independent of the first

device and the second device, the processing unit configured to execute

instructions, the instructions including [[,]] :

monitoring a plurality of request signals ~~for data~~ between the first device and

the second device in the network, at least one request signal including

a user identification parameter;

determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in a

request signal of the plurality of request signals and associated with

the first device is permitted access to ~~the~~ data associated with the

second device;

comparing a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a ~~pre-~~

~~determined~~ predetermined parameter associated with the data to

determine permission to access the data;

providing a response to the request signal of the plurality of request signals in

response to the comparison; and

allowing the plurality of request signals to pass uninterrupted between the first

device and the second device in response to an operational failure

within the detector device, the operational failure comprising a non-

functioning operation.

44.   (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein ~~processor~~ the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions comprising providing the response by allowing access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is greater than or equal to [[a]] the predetermined parameter associated with the data.

45.   (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein ~~processor~~ the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions comprising providing the response by allowing access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is less than or equal to [[a]] the predetermined parameter associated with the data.

46.   (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein ~~processor~~ the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions comprising providing the response by re-directing the ~~data~~ request signal of the plurality of request signals to a third device in response to the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than the predetermined ~~value~~ parameter associated with the data, the third device allowing for a re-setting of the predetermined parameter associated with the user to a new parameter comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.

47.   (Currently Amended) The device of claim 43, wherein the predetermined parameter associated with the user is one from a group comprising a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a bandwidth value, a quality of service value, and a content rating.

48.   (Currently Amended) The device of claim 47, further comprising allowing access to

one from a group comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in

response to at least one of the bandwidth value or <u>the</u> quality of service value being

greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.